

VZCZCXRO5290
PP RUEHAG RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDBU RUEHLH RUEHPW RUEHROV
DE RUEHAH #1281 3301128
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 261128Z NOV 07 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9767
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RHCUAAA/CINCTRNS SCOTT AFB IL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMUSCENTAF SHAW AFB SC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ AMC SCOTT AFB IL PRIORITY
RUEAHQA/HQ USAF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHFQAAA/HQ USAF RAMSTEIN AB GE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASHGABAT 001281

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/26/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [EAIR](#) [MARR](#) [MCAP](#) [MOPS](#) [US](#) [TX](#)
SUBJECT: BLANKET OVERFLIGHT APPROVED

REF: A. ASHGABAT 1255
[1](#)B. SECSTATE 158849

Classified By: CHARGE SYLVIA REED CURRAN FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) The Government of Turkmenistan has agreed to renew the blanket overflight and landing clearance request number 999C that had been due to expire November 30. Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Foreign Minister Rashit Meredov called in the Charge to deliver this news. Meredov said the present procedure of annual renewal, informing MFA by diplomatic note that the transits are for humanitarian purposes, should continue. He said this has served both countries for many years, and there is no need to change. The only request, said Meredov, is that the number of future flights should remain approximately the same as it has been in the last couple of years. He said the Embassy would receive a diplomatic note within a few days detailing this information.

[1](#)2. (C) Turning to the issue of medical flights, Meredov said his government did not see why blanket approval was necessary, given the possibility of obtaining medical care in Turkmenistan. (NOTE: The Embassy had been informed at the same time as the notice regarding military flights, by separate diplomatic note, that the annual blanket clearance for medical flights would also be subject to the same requirement to ask for permission for overflight and landing for each flight. END NOTE.) Therefore, he said, landing clearance for those flights should be sought on a case-by-case basis. He assured they would be approved within 24 hours. Charge countered that medical flights are only necessary for emergency cases, and 24 hours could be too long a delay when a life is at stake. She said single requests for flights could be acceptable, but that approval would be needed within a few hours. Meredov agreed that MFA would respond to requests for landing clearance for medical flights within a few hours.

[1](#)3. (C) COMMENT: Meredov had come immediately from a meeting with President Berdimuhamedov, so we can be assured that this decision to continue with blanket overflights has the blessing from on high. Better heads prevailed on this issue, realizing how important these flights are not only for the

success of Operation Enduring Freedom, but also for
U.S.-Turkmenistan bilateral relations. END COMMENT.
CURRAN